



**COMMUNITY DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
April 10, 2019**

PRESENT: Fred Morley, Chair
Eric Burchill
Christopher Daly
William Book
Dale Godsoe
Reg Manzer
Councillor Sam Austin
Councillor Lindell Smith
Councillor Waye Mason
Councillor Shawn Cleary

REGRETS: Gaynor Watson-Creed, Vice Chair
Jenna Khoury-Hanna
Rima Thomeh
Councillor Richard Zurawski

STAFF: Kelly Denty, Director of Planning and Development
Eric Lucic, Manager of Regional Planning
Kasia Tota, Principal Planner
Luc Ouellet, Planner III
Justin Preece, Planner II
Phoebe Rai, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated are online at halifax.ca.

The meeting was called to order at 11:11 a.m., and the Committee recessed at 12:37 p.m. The Committee reconvened at 12:57 p.m. and adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:11 a.m. in the Harbour East Marine Drive Community Council Meeting Room, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 28, 2018

MOVED by Councillor Smith, seconded by Dale Godsoe

THAT the minutes of November 28, 2018 be approved as presented

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

The agenda was approved as presented.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

The Chair noted that correspondence regarding item 8.1 had been received and circulated to Committee members.

8. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

8.1 Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law (Package A)

The following was before committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated April 3, 2019
- A staff presentation dated April 10, 2019
- Correspondence received from Paul J Gray, Rose & Joseph Hollery, Maria Scaravelli Gray, Robin Stewart, Neil Lovitt, Bruce Delo, and John Wimberly

Kelly Denty, Director of Planning and Development introduced the Centre Plan team led by Eric Lucic and Kasia Tota.

Eric Lucic, Manager of Regional Planning provided an overview of the staff presentation and the adoption path for the proposed Regional Centre Plan Package A. Lucic discussed the context and purpose of the Centre Plan, and noted that Package A deals with centres, corridors, higher order residential and future growth nodes, while Package B will include established residential, industrial, park, and institutional uses. They concluded by outlining major changes to the Plan since the last Committee meeting.

Lucic responded to questions of clarification from the Committee, noting that although the adoption path is more complex than anticipated, it is not a linear path and staff are confident that the Plan will reach Regional Council Committee of the Whole on June 18, 2019.

Kasia Tota, Principal Planner discussed the vision for the Regional Centre established by HRMbyDesign and the core concepts of complete communities, human scale, pedestrian first, and strategic growth. Tota outlined the general policies regarding environmental regulations, sustainability, urban agriculture, economic development, mixed-use & urban design, cultural landscapes, heritage, housing, and incentive or bonus zoning.

Tota responded to questions of clarification from the Committee, noting the following:

- As the incentive or bonus zoning formula includes a figure for market land values, the proposed Land Use By-law allows for an annual review of market value according to the Consumer Price Index and a more comprehensive periodic review of the average land market values ideally every five years;
- 60% of density bonusing is proposed to be directed to affordable housing, and the remaining 40% can be directed to any of the public benefit categories outlined in the Land Use By-law. Under the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*, the municipality must be transparent about what any funds collected will be used for;
- Should Regional Council approve the proposed framework for density bonusing, staff will need to develop an Administrative Order to govern the management and expenditure of money-in-lieu funds from a reserve fund administered through the Audit and Finance Standing Committee;
- Staff have aligned some aspects of the Centre Plan with the plan for downtown Halifax;
- Package A does not view industrial lands as underutilized; Package B will fully explore how to maintain industrial lands but not encouraging industrial uses where residential growth is desired.

The Committee suggested that the map in Schedule 24 of the Land Use By-law include a legend for clarity and expressed some concern with the revision of the vision statement from the Regional Plan.

A brief discussion was held respecting whether or not a portion of the taxes collected by the municipality on the incremental space that gets developed through density bonusing could be directed to the affordable housing fund. Tota indicated that taxation is out of scope for planning staff and this process, but the Committee could recommend to Regional Council that this be considered.

Tota agreed to bring more information regarding proposed amendments to the vision of the Regional Plan and detail regarding affordable housing and density bonusing for further review at a future Committee meeting.

Kasia Tota presented on Urban Structure which is broken down into five designations, each with underlying zones.

The Committee held a discussion regarding growth nodes. Staff confirmed that the process for Development Agreements in growth node areas such as Shannon Park and Dartmouth Cove will be quicker because they will pull from build form regulations, for example the height of the streetwall. Potential future growth nodes designated Comprehensive Development District (CDD) zones such as Strawberry Hill, Kempt Road and Young Street would need to be initiated by Regional Council if or when appropriate. Some concern was expressed regarding whether the identified future growth nodes are all realistic.

Responding to questions regarding changes of designations, staff noted that Highfield Park had initially been considered a Future Growth Node, but due to lot depth and access to Highfield Park Road it was modified to be a Centre. Windmill Road near Shannon Park had been higher order residential, but based on community feedback it was determined this would be a good corridor site as it already has a mix of uses. Tota offered to provide a list of all designation changes to the Committee.

Regarding projections for growth in the regional centre, staff indicated there are challenges to the modelling, but they could prepare some information for the Committee regarding the centres.

Luc Ouellet, Planner III delivered the staff presentation regarding the Land Use By-law including changes to the By-law structure and list of planning tools and associated approval processes. Ouellet advised that for Level I site plan approvals the addition of an appeals process would add some time, but for Levels II and III the process could be completed more quickly as they would no longer require Development Agreements. Responding to a question regarding permitted uses abutting the streetline on pedestrian oriented commercial streets, Ouellet noted that the list was not variable and requested guidance from the Committee if it was felt additional uses should be included.

A discussion was held regarding the deletion of the Large Lot Development Agreement Policy which had targeted lots in excess of one hectare. Kasia Tota noted that the intent of this policy was about site planning, streets, parks, and proper integration of sites with the surrounding contexts, not to negotiate built form or densities. Options are CDD zones which enable the municipality to negotiate road connections and parks, and the subdivision process which dictates road alignment.

The Committee indicated a need to identify some key opportunity sites where the municipality could establish additional controls and/or establish a unique subdivision by-law for the regional centre.

Justin Preece, Planner II outlined the design requirements for site plan approval that will be contained in the Land Use Buy-law. Preece noted that staff is recommending an advisory committee to make recommendations to the Development Officer, and the Development Officer will have final approval ensuring that quantitative and qualitative requirements are met. Preece also outlined standards for pedestrian wind impact assessments and shadow impact assessments.

A discussion ensued with Committee members expressing discomfort with the lack of a design manual and questioning how to more closely link the Municipal Planning Strategy with the Land Use By-law to ensure that the urban design requirements are binding and enforceable. Some concern was raised meeting the established minimums would not enforce an aspirational urban design ideal as could be achieved with a design manual.

Staff responded to questions regarding the proposed advisory committee, noting that this would result in increased accountability for the Development Officer, and the advisory committee would provide advice on design beginning earlier in the process going beyond the minimum requirements to consider how the design elements work together.

A brief discussion was held regarding traffic impact studies, with staff noting that they would not automatically be required but for anything discretionary such a study could be requested. Staff indicated that in the regional centre where growth and density is expected, many people use active transportation or public transit.

A question was posed regarding the difference in minimum lot frontage of 20 feet on a straight street versus 14 feet on a curved street, noting that reduced minimum lot frontages can help encourage development of affordable housing. Staff noted that 20 feet was selected for access for utilities and utility servicing corridors.

Due to time constraints it was agreed that staff would continue their presentation at the next Committee meeting. Kasia Tota indicated that staff would prepare additional information for future meetings regarding key questions that arose from this discussion including the vision statement, community benefits, growth projections, changes to urban structure, density bonusing, affordable housing, design guidelines and one-hectare lot policy.

9. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, April 17, 2019

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

Phoebe Rai
Legislative Assistant